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December 14, 1944

Reserve

TO: All District and Sub-district Representatives

FROM: J. J. Dittrick, Chief,
Civilian Food Requirements Division

SUBJECT: Advisory Committee Recommendations

You will be interested in the following comments made by Washington in response to recommendations and observations submitted by committees in the Western Region. Much of this material can be used to good advantage at your next committee meetings.

ARIZONA

That Surpluses be Allocated on Population Basis, Shortage Areas, or Some Other Equitable Basis: Of course, there are many difficulties attached to such a policy because government exercises no control whatsoever over distribution by private firms it is difficult to assure that commodities which are repurchased, or returned to processors or vendors of set asides, will be distributed only in areas of short supply. Normal processes of distribution are effected as soon as processors or original vendors assume title to the merchandise. Naturally, the food trade wants a minimum of interference in this normal process. We have discussed these recommendations with representatives of our Sales Division and they state that the possibility of inaugurating such procedures, to the extent practicable, only when surpluses become burdensome is under consideration. They definitely believe that the volume of surpluses currently being released do not warrant such measures.

With regard to assumption of transportation cost from the f.o.b. point, procedures have been used which permit freight allowance under certain conditions where reconditioning is necessary. In this regard and for your information we quote from Sales Plan PB-44 covering jams, jellies, preserves, marmalades and fruit butters as follows:

"In case any portion is at present stored in warehouse other than that of the original packer and is purchased by the original packer, the War Food Administration will pay freight back to his warehouse for reconditioning, if reconditioning is necessary, and if within a distance of approximately three hundred miles and if no reconditioning facilities are available nearer.

"Should any portion be purchased by a packer other than the original packer, the War Food Administration will pay freight to his warehouse if reconditioning is necessary, and if within the prescribed distance just mentioned and if not facilities for reconditioning are available nearby.

"In case any portion is at present stored in a warehouse other than that of the original packer, and is not being returned to a packer's warehouse for reconditioning as described in the two preceding paragraphs and delivery is being taken at present location of portion, freight from

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original processing plant to present location will be charged to purchaser.

"In case any portion is at present stored in a warehouse other than that of the original packer, and is not being returned to a packer's warehouse for reconditioning as described in the two preceding paragraphs, but purchase is accepted by the War Food Administration for delivery to a point other than present location, the freight will be equalized to destination by the War Food Administration. Railroad, routings on such movements will be determined by the War Food Administration in order to utilize storage-in-transit-privileges whenever possible, but in no case will freight allowance be made on back-hauls from present location except under specific authorization from the Sales Division."

Elimination of Point Rationing: We note that this recommendation is based upon the opinion that the trade has gained valuable experience since the inauguration of rationing; that the trade itself allocates both rationed and unrationed commodities in short supply; and that formal rationing should therefore be eliminated to allow the trade to fully utilize its experience and function normally in food distribution. Without doubt the trade has acquired extensive experience since the inception of rationing, of which fact we are grateful because an intimate understanding of the basic problems and mechanical operation of rationing by the trade has greatly simplified the overall administration of the program. Also, the trade, on its own initiative, has sought to extend the effectiveness of rationing by allocating commodities in short supply. This admirable cooperation has increased the success of rationing by an immeasurable amount and we believe the trade is to be congratulated for its prompt and efficient adaptation to temporary governmental controls for the maximum common benefit of the producers, the trade and the consumer.

Very truly, rationing in this country has been an unselfish cooperative effort between the trade and government. We believe such cooperation to be tantamount to success in a nation as large and heterogeneous as ours. The overall administrative requirements and ramifications of rationing are too great for the government alone or the trade alone. It must be a joint effort if a national system of equitable distribution is realized.

When considering the overall need for rationing, we must not overlook that our shortages are further aggravated by the greatest accumulation of purchasing power that the nation has ever known. When the normal national civilian demand for a given commodity greatly exceeds the supply available, it follows that an unequitable per capita distribution will result unless some overall distributive machinery functions which endeavors to guarantee that each person receives his proportionate share. We appreciate that rationing places abnormal labor demands upon the trade, but in the absence of such regulatory procedure the distribution of scarce commodities in a high demand market would eventually become a matter of "first come first served" - to the detriment of the total health and morale of the nation. Also, in the absence of rationing, it is entirely conceivable that many areas of the country would receive little or none of scarce commodities. Greatly expanded purchasing power would absorb much or all of the available supply locally, or adjacent to areas of production and processing. While the trade would accomplish certain rationing equality on a local basis, it could not accomplish equality on a national basis. For this and other reasons set forth above we cannot favorably consider this recommendation.

CALIFORNIA

Lamb Be Point Free: The West continues to be fortunate in possessing adequate

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supplies of lamb. However, even in the West only seven percent of areas reported roasts and stews were surplus and none reported steaks and chops were surplus. In fact, as many as 20-23 percent reported the various cuts as scarce. These percentages increase in other sections of the country to a high of 82 percent reporting the various cuts scarce in the Northeast Region. Therefore, the national lamb situation presents an unbalanced picture of extremes.

It is anticipated that lamb slaughter during December will be approximately the same as during November although it will be less than the September-October slaughter. The lamb-mutton civilian allocation during the quarter October-December was 228 million pounds whereas the proposed January-March allocation will be only 158 million pounds which will be about 10 percent less than was consumed during the same quarter of 1944. Nationally, there is no justification for removing lamb from rationing, although members of the trade may be assured that the lamb supply in the West will be closely watched to determine whether alleviating action will be warranted.

That Surplus Foods be Offered in the Third Instance through Cooperative Surplus Food Committees Set Up by Food Brokers: Existing procedures comply with this suggestion to a certain degree and again we quote from Sales Plan PB-44 as follows:

"Methods of Sale: 1. It is proposed that all the above items will be offered for sale to those canners who originally packed them.

2. Any portion of the above items not disposed of under method (1) will be offered for sale to competitive packers of the same commodity.

3. Any portion of those above mentioned items not disposed of under methods (1) and (2) will then be offered to established distributors direct and/or through independent sales agents or food brokers ..."

We do not believe that commodities may be offered at any time only through brokers' committees in the event that it is impracticable to make the first two offers. Such would constitute a degree of preferential treatment which we discussed briefly above.

With regard to the entire subject of surplus food disposal we are informed by the Sales Division that a rather extensive treatise of the subject is in process which they anticipate releasing shortly. When this statement is available we hope to obtain copies for distribution among the committees.

Ceiling Price for 1944 Pack of Fruits, Berries and Vegetables: Several of the committees observed that failure of the OPA to announce ceiling prices for the 1944 pack of berries, fruits and vegetables was delaying the movement of these commodities. FPR-1, Amendment 15 to Supplement 7, dated November 13, 1944, provides that effective November 17, 1944 processors' ceiling prices for minor fruits, berries and vegetables of the 1944 pack will be obtained under Pricing Method No. 2. The OPA states that methods for pricing the major packed fruits, berries and vegetables have already been covered in Pricing Method No. 1.

Sugar Shortage: No changes in the current sugar rationing basis are anticipated at this time. The current sugar shortage is extensive throughout the United States, particularly in the Northeast, Midwest, and South. This shortage is the result of a combination of circumstances. Before the war, this country imported about one million tons of sugar per year from the Philippines which was about one-seventh of the country's annual consumption. Of course, this source of sup-

ply has been lost during the past three years. Also, the domestic production of sugar beets in 1944 has been about one-third less than before the war, an annual loss equal to nearly 500,000 tons of raw sugar. The 1943-44 sugar crop of Puerto Rico was about 250,000 tons smaller than usual. These were major sources of this country's sugar supply, which forces us to depend upon Cuba to make up the deficit. In general, an admirable job has been done because receipts from Cuba during the first seven months of 1944 amounted to 2,237,320 tons as compared with 1,577,023 for the corresponding period in 1943.

The other side of the picture is that the difficulty of expanding our Cuban supply has been aggravated by shipping problems and seaboard refiners have experienced difficulty in securing labor for processing. Also, in the face of these supply difficulties, the sugar consumption of the country has increased this year to such an extent that stocks have been drastically reduced. For instance, the continental consumption of sugar increased 615,458 short tons, raw value, during the period January-October of this year as compared with the same period last year. Stocks on November 4, 1944 were 465,290 short tons, raw value, less than on October 31, 1943. The increased consumption of sugar this year is the result of home and commercial canning of the large fruit crop, additional production of condensed milk, use in connection with the record egg production, production of industrial alcohol, and substitution for other types of sweets.

Sugar supplies in the United States are likely to remain relatively short so long as (1) the Japanese control the Philippines and Java (2) the sugar beet crop in this country remains much smaller than in pre-war years, (3) Europe's need for imported sugar is abnormally large, (4) the domestic demand for sugar remains at its present high level.

Establishment of WFA Representative in San Diego: We have referred this recommendation to Mr. Malcolm Miller, Chief of Field Relations, who corroborated Mr. Nebel's comments that this possibility had been under consideration for some time. Any comments which we receive from Mr. Miller will be forwarded to you.

Federally Inspected Packers in San Diego Area be Relieved of Set Aside Orders: We agree with Mr. Nebel that there is scant possibility that the necessity for set aside orders will diminish as long as the war continues. Of course, it seems highly illogical to have set aside orders operating in an area which must subsequently ship in meat to fill the deficit to meet civilian demand. Yet in this war the armed forces must be assured of dependable sources of federally inspected meat. Of course, if these supplies can be obtained at slaughter points close to seaboard or armed force establishments, so much the better. In any event, the supplies for the armed forces must come first through the most expeditious means and what remains may be assimilated from whatever source for civilian supplies. Since San Diego is a major embarkation point and "supports" major military establishments there is no possibility that set asides may be removed.

In the absence of more specific information regarding the shipment of milk from the San Diego milk shed to Texas and of meat from Reno to Texas, requiring that supplies be shipped in to meet local requirements, we can only assume that such Texas shipments are required by the armed forces in which case the thoughts expressed above would apply.

Utility Beef be Returned to Rationing: Our reports indicate that utility beef remains generally in adequate supply in perhaps one-half to two-thirds of the areas of the country. We are now approaching the end of the high seasonal slaughter of utility stock but, even so, large numbers remain on the "hoof" as potential supply. It is estimated that civilian supplies of utility beef during December will

total about 167 million pounds as compared with 174 million pounds during November. Also, overall beef slaughter during the first quarter of next year will be 7 percent less than slaughter the last quarter of the year. However, even though the trend of utility supplies will be a gradual reduction, the increase of pork available during the coming months should "cushion" the slight reduction in utility supplies. Accordingly, we cannot recommend that utility beef be restored to rationing. Even if it were, the points available to the public could not be increased in proportion to the number of utility cows slaughtered in October 1944 because that number is substantially larger than anticipated utility slaughter during the coming months.

Hotel and Restaurant Meat Supply Problems: We discussed this recommendation with the OPA who advised that it was their purpose to effect an institutional users rationing reduction which would be analogous with rationing for home consumers. In the opinion of the OPA, it would have been inequitable to effect a lower percentage reduction for institutional users than the percentage reduction applied to home consumers. Under the circumstances, the OPA feels that the presently applied adjustment procedure now affecting institutional users is the only equitable means for adjusting the current reduction in point issuance of meats and fats without disturbing normal business policies. We have discussed the supply position of meats and butter above. In view of the presently anticipated supplies of these products, we do not believe an increase in the ration issuance to institutional users is possible or warranted because it would be necessary to accord comparable increases to home consumers.

Some Relief be Provided to Move Tomato Products: In this regard we have little to add to our statements of last month in which we pointed out that national supplies in relation to government set aside and civilian supplies did not warrant a cessation or relaxation of rationing. After the government set aside is met, it is estimated that the supplies of tomatoes available for civilian distribution will be only 62 percent of the 1944 consumption and 49 percent of the 1943 consumption, while in the case of tomato juice, supplies available will be approximately 75 percent of 1944 consumption and 61 percent of 1943 consumption. In view of this, it is our opinion that current and anticipated civilian supplies of tomato products for the nation do not warrant rationing changes at this time.

Whenever local surpluses continue unabated, it is our suggestion that if the trade desires to be relieved of a specific surplus, such be made known to the Regional Office. That Office will be aware of shortages which may exist elsewhere in the West and will be in a position to render assistance on a local and regional basis in locating a demand for the surplus in shortage areas.

Regional Rationing: This recommendation is answered to some extent in the discussion of "Elimination of Point Rationing." Without doubt the question of regional rationing was extensively discussed during the deliberations prior to the inauguration of rationing. In order that rationing may effect equality in distribution throughout the nation, it must be predicated upon national supply and demand relationships to the minimization of the local relationship. It is granted that local supply and movement of a specific commodity may be in contrast to the national pattern as individual cities and markets adjacent to areas of production and processing will readily show a fluctuating supply pattern. Even so, special considerations cannot necessarily be given that individual market or area from the standpoint of rationing. Such would be preferential treatment to the residents of that area who are fortunate enough to be "close to the land" with its sources of production and processing, when at the same time thousands of people in areas remote from production may be doing without. On the other hand, rationing cannot be relaxed over the entire country as a result of plentiful supplies in isolated areas because it would result in critical shortages in areas of

short supply. If equality is to be gained in distributing commodities which are nationally in short supply, rationing cannot be relaxed in individual markets even though temporary troublesome surpluses may exist and commodity movement may be slow. A uniformly standard system of rationing will force the "surplus" in local markets to areas of scarcity without undue delay.

A final important consideration is the administrative cost of regional rationing. Temporary shortages and surpluses would arise within regions and areas which would result in literally dozens of constantly changing local rationing programs. The administrative expense, for the government and the trade, in adjusting rationing to these numerous local situations would be prohibitive.

Utility Beef Publicity Campaign: Our Livestock and Meats Branch informs us that the American Meat Institute and the National Association of Food Chains have already conducted publicity campaigns which have pointed out the proper cooking and serving methods for utility beef. Basically, we believe more concentrated efforts in this direction should be centered in state and local nutritional committees. We have been informed that a local organization in New York City is taking a decided interest in such a program.

Danger of Canned Fruits with Pits Spoiling: In our October 25 letter we pointed out that Revised R.O. 13, Section 9.11 provides the procedure to be followed in effecting point value reductions with price decreases in order to move old packs in danger of spoilage. If no satisfaction has yet been obtained from the OPA we suggest that the committees concerned invite state or regional OPA officials to meet with the committees in order that all phases of the problems may be discussed and a satisfactory decision reached. In addition, we will again call this matter to the attention of the Washington OPA office.

Question With Regard to Enforcement of Rationing: We have never had any reason to believe that the OPA has not vigorously sought to enforce rationing regulations with equal emphasis all over the country even though it has experienced difficulty in obtaining investigative and enforcement personnel. We are sure that the OPA will welcome any information or recommendations from the trade regarding violations of rationing regulations in any section of the country and will not condone any apparent irregularities in our rationing structure.

IDAHO

Removal of all Processed Fruits (including water-packed) From Rationing Except Berries, Fruit Cocktail, Pineapple and Pineapple Juice, or that Individual Point Values be Lowered: Similar recommendations were received from the Western Region last month. Basically our position as stated in our letters of October 24 and 25 remain unchanged, because supplies of canned fruits available for civilian distribution do not justify adjusting restrictions currently imposed. Even though the country as a whole enjoyed a bumper fruit crop, civilians will in most cases receive greatly reduced quantities of processed fruits. Apricots will be the only important canned fruit for which supplies will be relatively plentiful in relation to previous demand. Even so, since the available supplies of other fruits will be smaller, substitute purchasing will result in abnormal demands for apricots.

The following statistics support our contention that current and anticipated national supplies of processed fruits on an overall basis do not warrant rationing adjustments. After government set-asides are met it is estimated the supply of peaches available for civilian consumption will be only 36 percent of 1943 consumption and only 57 percent of 1944 consumption; in the case of pears, the avail-

able supply will be approximately 16 percent of 1943 consumption and 21 percent of 1944 consumption; and in the case of apricots the supply will be about 138 percent of the 1943 consumption and 860 percent of the 1944 consumption. Of course, the latter figure is badly distorted because only meager civilian supplies were available in 1944. As far as the current supplies of major processed fruits are concerned, in every instance the West enjoys the best supply of any portion of the country. For peaches, 40 percent of the areas in the West report no stocks or scarce. The supply becomes progressively worse in other regions to the extent that 100 percent of the areas in the South report supply as scarce or no stocks. For pears, 77 percent of the areas in the West report no stocks or scarce and in three other regions 100 percent of the areas report no stocks or scarce. For plums and prunes, only 13 percent of the areas in the West report supplies as scarce whereas the shortest supplies exist in the Northeast where 93 percent of areas report no stocks or scarce. For apricots, 17 percent of Western areas report supplies scarce. The shortest supplies are found in the Midwest where 71 percent of areas report no stocks or scarce. Red Sour Pitted cherries are reported as no stocks or scarce in 90 percent of Western areas and 97 percent of Midwestern areas. Sweet cherries are reported as no stocks or scarce in 67 percent of the Western areas. The South is in shortest supply where 100 percent of the areas reported scarce or no stocks. Berries are in extremely short supply in all regions.

We wish to reiterate that in the absence of rationing many areas in short supply would continue to receive little or none of scarce commodities because greatly expanded purchasing power would absorb much or all of the available supply locally, or adjacent to the areas of production and processing. Further, our reports indicate that consumers over the nation now have in their possession sufficient points to absorb the available fruit supplies at existing point values. Of course, it is admitted there has been psychological hesitation to purchase at existing point values but this resistance will diminish, when existing supplies move into areas of short supply.

Veal Be Restored to Rationing: The current and anticipated supplies of veal available do not warrant a restoration of veal to rationing. Our reports show a continued heavy slaughter of calves with domestic supplies remaining generally steady. In fact, a 10 percent increase in veal supplies is anticipated during December as compared with November. The civilian allocation for the quarter October-December is approximately 12 percent greater than consumption during the same quarter of 1943. The proposed civilian allocation for the quarter January-March will be about 11 percent greater than for the same quarter in 1944, and almost 40 percent greater than was allocated during the same quarter in 1943. The West also enjoys the best supply position for veal in that 23-27 percent of the areas reported the various cuts as adequate to a high of 43-51 percent reporting the various cuts as scarce in the South.

Points be Reduced on Pork Loins and Restored to Bacon: There are shortages of all pork cuts throughout the nation -- the shortage has not been peculiar to local areas. As you know, the set aside order absorbs about 45 percent of federally inspected pork. Also, there was a 24 percent reduction in the spring pig crop and we are just emerging from the seasonal low for hog marketing. From 80 to 100 percent of all areas of the country have reported all cuts of pork to be scarce or no stocks with no region enjoying adequate supplies on an overall basis. For example 87 percent of the Western areas reported loins scarce and 98 percent of the Southern areas reported supplies as scarce or no stocks.

However, more hogs are now coming to market and it is expected that about 20 percent more pork will be available in December than in November. In the case of loins it is anticipated that 35 million pounds will be available each week in December for civilian consumption as compared with 31 million pounds per week in

November. In the case of bacon it is expected that 28 million pounds will be available each week in December for civilian consumption as compared with 26 million pounds per week in November. Even though the immediate supply prospects for pork are improving, the long range outlook is not good. Lend Lease and armed forces demands will remain high and it is expected that meat production next year will be two billion pounds less than this year, most of which reduction will be pork. In the case of loins anticipated supplies do not warrant a point reduction and we do not wish to recommend that bacon be rationed until absolutely necessary.

MONTANA

Advising Trade in Advance of Proposed Sales of Specific Commodities: The existing procedure for surplus food disposal provides that uniform public announcement of offers for sale will be made all over the country through our regional and district offices at the same time that the commodities are offered to the original processor or vendor. We do not regard it advisable for any group to receive preferential treatment to the extent that they are advised of impending sales in advance of the actual sales announcement. Such would definitely not be keeping faith with the trade and would multiply our difficulties in endeavoring to assure an orderly distribution of the surplus.

NEVADA

Packer Hardships Within Jurisdiction of Order Administrator: As we stated in our October 25 letter, when meat has been set aside to meet government requirements and the Quartermaster's failure to accept it is causing undue hardship, the individual packer should present his case to the Order Administrator, Mr. E. S. Waterbury, 5 South Wabash Avenue, Chicago, who has full authority to grant exceptions based on hardship. Therefore, the Reno recommendations regarding the QMC time limit for acceptance, the Army Veterinary Corps decision regarding acceptance of beef held in excess of five days, the opinion that all carcass beef be shipped in rack cars should be taken up directly with the Order Administrator by the packer or packers involved. By such procedure we believe the packers will receive more expeditious and satisfactory service. For instance, we do not feel that we can adequately present these four specific problems to the Order Administration because we do not possess adequate facts. Mr. Waterbury is located in the same building as the Army and Navy Procurement representatives which greatly facilitates his taking such problems directly to their attention as packers may refer to him.

Ration Butter & Cheese Separately from Meat and/or Coupon Method: These recommendations would effect substantial increases in points available for meat purchase. As we pointed out in our August 28 letter, point values and the number of points validated per person have been predicated as closely as possible in conformity with the total supply available on a national basis. If butter and cheese were rationed separately there would be no alternative but to decrease the points available for meat because the current supplies do not warrant an increase in the consumers' meat purchasing power. By rationing these products on the same point system, it is felt it allows the consumer more flexibility in budgeting and planning his point expenditures which is highly important when one considers the many consumer patterns which exist in this country.

Butter is in short supply throughout the country as more people are able to buy it than ever before. Out of every 100 pounds of this year's butter supply, 80 will be consumed by civilians. Also, civilians are drinking from 20 to 25 percent more milk than before the war, and although milk production this year is expected to be about 15 billion pounds above pre-war levels, this increase is going into fluid milk, cheese, evaporated milk, and milk powder. Our armed forces have requested more than

50 percent more evaporated milk than in 1943, have more than doubled their needs for whole milk powder and have asked for increased quantities of cheese. The above does not promise any improvement in butter production during the coming months. Combine that outlook with a decreased production of about 131 million pounds during the first 7 months of this year, as compared with the same period last year, together with an expected reduction in August and October of 45 million pounds below the same months in 1943, and future supplies of butter appear even less promising.

UTAH

Beef Be Removed From Rationing: The beef cuts most in demand continue to be in short supply throughout the country with the exception of the areas in the West where only 33 percent report loin steaks scarce and 37 percent report round steaks scarce, as compared with 75 percent of the areas reporting those cuts scarce in the Northeast. The supply available for domestic consumption in December will be 129 million pounds per week as compared with 131 million pounds per week during November, but the supply available will be of better quality since more feed-lot cattle will be marketed and 80 percent of cutters and canners slaughtered under federal inspection will be set aside for governmental use. Accordingly, in view of the current and anticipated supply and demand relationship beef cannot be removed from rationing, or the point values lowered.

Under rationing the average American is consuming more meat today than he did during the four year period before the war. Before the war the per capita consumption was about 126 pounds, but it is expected to total about 145 pounds during 1944. Of course, some of us are eating less meat than before the war. The increased consumption has occurred in that large segment of our population whose diet was substandard before the war. With increased purchasing power they are now receiving their share of meat with a net improvement in the dietary level of the country.

Time Limit of 72 Hours for Processors to Accept or Refuse Surplus Offering if Refused Offering Would Then be Made Public: We do not believe 72 hours is a sufficient length of time to allow the processor to make a decision regarding acceptance or rejection. Further, public opinion demands that governmental negotiations involving sales to private business be a matter of public knowledge from the outset, which also guarantees that no one may say the government is exercising preferential treatment in surplus disposal. Any semblance of preferential treatment in disposing of public property would surely invite widespread criticism in these days of short supply.

WASHINGTON

Campaign for Consumption of Frozen Fish: We note several recommendations relative to this subject some of which recommended that no intensive programs be carried out in certain areas and one recommending that such programs be conducted in the South, Middlewest and East.

At the present time such campaigns have been conducted in Pittsburg, Chicago and St. Louis in which we have participated. It is anticipated that such campaigns will be conducted only in "spot" areas possessing excessive storage stocks and in which the frozen fish demand is already traditionally high. It should be pointed out that Office of Distribution participation in intensive local campaigns remains largely within the discretion of Regional Civilian Food Requirements representatives who are in a position to measure the need for such intensive effort.

Surplus Offerings be Broken Down into Smaller Lots: At the present time only a very small percentage of surplus offerings are not accepted by the original processor, or vendor, or processors of competitive products. Such will likely continue until the volume of offerings are substantially increased. Until the volume is increased, we believe that administrative expense, as well as loading and shipping problems, would prohibit breaking the offerings into smaller lots.

OREGON

Rehabilitation and Reemployment of Veterans: We are intensely interested in the outline covering the essential features of Dr. Carter's speech before the Portland Committee. We would appreciate receiving a copy of this outline because it is anticipated that the Food Distribution Advisory Committees can be of extensive service in the rehabilitation and reemployment of veterans in the postwar era